

# PROPERTY PLANNING COMMON ELEMENTS

## BACKGROUND AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### GLOSSARY

**Acquisition authority:** The Natural Resources Board-approved name or authority (typically the name of a property) under which the department can acquire land.

**Acreage goal:** Acreage the department is approved to purchase within a given project boundary.

**Administrative Code:** The set of rules promulgated by state agencies to interpret and enforce laws (statutes) passed by the Legislature. Rules promulgated by DNR are given the prefix 'NR' for 'natural resource rule'.

**Amendment:** See 'Master Plan Amendment'.

**Best Management Practice (BMP):** An action, or combination of actions, that is determined to be an effective and practicable means of achieving a management objective.

**Deed Acres:** Acreage derived from DNR Land Record System based off the acquisition deed and described in the legal description.

**Ecological Landscapes:** Sixteen areas of Wisconsin with different ecological attributes and management opportunities that can be used to identify the best areas of the state to manage for different natural communities, habitats, aquatic features, and native plants and animals from an ecosystem management perspective. The boundaries are substantially based on the National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units developed by the U.S. Forest Service, with some subsections combined to produce a manageable number of units.

**Ecosystem management:** A system of planning, protecting, managing, and restoring ecosystem composition, structure, and function to ensure sustainability across a range of spatial and temporal scales and to provide desired ecological, economic, and social conditions and benefits.

**Forest certification:** Independent, third-party certification programs that verify that forest management meets strict standards for ecological, social, and economic sustainability. DNR lands are dual certified under Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) standards.

**GIS acres:** Acreage calculated from DNR spatial datasets using a Geographic Information System (GIS). When applied to DNR Managed Lands, there will usually be slight differences between GIS acres and deed acres due to different methods of collecting and recording parcel geometry.

**Habitat classification:** Generalizations of WisFIRS cover types used for property planning.

**Handbook:** A DNR guidance document that contains continuing procedures, standards, instructions, and techniques on a specific, focused topic.

**Land management classifications:** Classifications authorized and described in NR 44 that are applied to a property or management area within a property to describe the general management objective for that area as determined



during the master planning process. Land management classifications generally frame the types of land management and public use activities that will be pursued in each management area.

**Manual Code:** A DNR policy/procedure document. Manual Codes are established to communicate specific procedures that employees need to follow to comply with department policies or Administrative Codes.

**Master Plan:** A document that describes the authorized resource management, recreation management, and facility development that may take place on a DNR property. Master plans for DNR properties are developed according to the guidelines set forth in Chapter NR 44, Wisconsin Administrative Code.

**Master Plan Amendment:** A change in a management classification or subclassification of a property or management area within a property described in a master plan without a change in the property goals or objectives. Amendments must be approved by the Natural Resources Board.

**Master Plan Variance:** A change in management activity or use described in a master plan that is consistent with the area's land management classification and does not constitute a change in an objective for management or public use of the area as specified in the plan. A variance may be approved by the DNR Secretary or a Division Administrator.

**Natural Community:** An assemblage of different plant and animal species living together in a particular area, at a particular time, in a particular habitat, interacting with one another and with the abiotic environment around them, and subject to primarily natural disturbance regimes. Assemblages that are repeated across a landscape in an observable pattern constitute a community type. No two assemblages are exactly alike.

**Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI):** A methodology and database for collecting, characterizing, storing, and managing data on rare species, natural communities, and natural features throughout the state. Wisconsin's NHI program is housed in DNR's Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation.

**Natural Resources Board (NRB):** The 7-member citizen board that sets policy for the department and exercises authority and responsibility in accordance with governing state laws.

**NR 44:** Chapter in the Wisconsin Administrative Code that authorizes, establishes, and describes the process for developing master plans for DNR properties.

**Primary Site:** Ecologically important site identified on a property through a biotic inventory or assessment. Primary Sites are delineated because they encompass the best examples of: rare and representative natural communities; documented occurrences of rare species populations; and/or opportunities for ecological restoration or connections. These sites warrant high protection and/or restoration consideration during the development of property master plans.

**Project boundary:** Spatial representation of an area (e.g., a property) where the department has authority to acquire land. A project boundary represents an area of acquisition authority.

**Recreation Opportunities Analysis (ROA):** A department study of existing outdoor-based recreation opportunities and future recreation needs around the state. The study identifies future needs for providing high-quality recreation experiences and the role of DNR properties in helping meet those needs.



**Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN):** Wildlife species (including invertebrates, birds, fish, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians) in Wisconsin that are in need of conservation action because they: are already listed as threatened or endangered; are at risk due to threats to their life history needs or habitats; are rare due to declining populations, abundance, and/or distribution; show declining trends in their habitats and populations. SGCN are identified in Wisconsin's Wildlife Action Plan.

**Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP):** A report that periodically evaluates status, trends, demand, and needs for outdoor recreation throughout the state. The SCORP is a primary source of information on outdoor recreation in Wisconsin.

**Statutory designation:** The official designation of a property (e.g., State Park, State Wildlife Area, State Forest, State Natural Area, etc.), authorized and defined in Wisconsin Statutes and Administrative Code, that describes what the primary purpose of the property is and, therefore, frames the general scope of land management and public use that can take place there.

**Tension Zone:** An area of transition between two distinct zones. In Wisconsin, the Tension Zone is the state's most pronounced environmental gradient, defined primarily by climate (cooler and moister to the north, relatively warmer and drier to the south). It consists of a narrow band that runs from northwestern to southeastern Wisconsin, separating the northern forest (including the boreal element) from the southern forest and prairies. Many species of plants and animals reach the limits of their ranges in this zone.

**Variance:** See 'Master Plan Variance'.

**Wildlife Action Plan (WAP):** The comprehensive resource for the conservation of rare and declining species and their habitats in the state. The Wisconsin WAP identifies Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and lays out a strategy to conserve and sustain them and their habitats for future generations.

**Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA):** A state law designed to encourage informed decision-making by state agencies. WEPA requires state agencies to consider the effects of their policies, plans, programs, and actions on the quality of the human environment. WEPA created Chapter 1.11, Wisconsin Statutes. DNR's WEPA responsibilities are further described in Chapter NR 150, Wisconsin Administrative Code.

**Wisconsin Field Inventory and Reporting System (WisFIRS):** A database and web-based application used by DNR staff to store habitat data collected in the field and plan for and track forest management practices.

